

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW ANT-MIMICKING SPIDER,
SYNEMOSYNA TRANSVERSA. sp. nov.

BY

DURGADAS MUKERJEE,

Lecturer in Zoology. Calcutta University.

(With 2 text-figures).

Synemosyna transversa, sp. nov.

No ant-like spiders of the group *Synemosyne*¹ are so far known from India, though a few species of the genus *Synemosyna* Hentz (Silliman's *Amerc. Journ. Sci. Art.* xxi, p. 108, 1832) have been recorded by Thorell² from Burma. In 1927, while collecting ants from Barrackpore I came across a single female spider belonging to the genus *Synemosyna*, in company with the ants *Diacamma vagans* (Smith) and *Componotus sericeous* (Fabr.). The spider showed a striking resemblance to the Ponerine ants in possessing a constriction in the abdomen, a node in the pedicel and in its cephalo-thorax being separated into a broad head and a convex thorax. The specimen does not conform to any previously described species, and is described below under the name *Synemosyna transversa*.

Female, length—5 mm.

The dorsal surface of cephalic area (Fig. 2) which is bounded by the anterior and posterior rows of eyes, is flat and broader than long; the sides are clothed with short hairs. The eyes are arranged in three rows. The anterior row is recurved, and the eyes in this row are equally spaced; the distance between the centrals is the same as that between the central and the anterior lateral. The anterior central eyes are the largest in diameter and about two and a half times the diameter of the anterior lateral eyes. The middle row is nearer the anterior row; the third row is situated near the posterior margin of the cephalic area and these eyes are as wide apart as the cephalo-thorax at that place. The palp is longer than the cephalic area. The digital joint is larger than the radial. The cubital is shorter than the radial. The chelicerae are vertical and pluridentate.

The cephalo-thorax is divided by a deep transverse constriction into the cephalic and the thoracic regions (Fig. 1). The cephalic region is as broad as long, while the thoracic region is longer than broad and exceeds the cephalic region in length. The thoracic region is convex above and its posterior edge near the pedicel is slightly turned upward. The cephalo-thorax is pubescent,

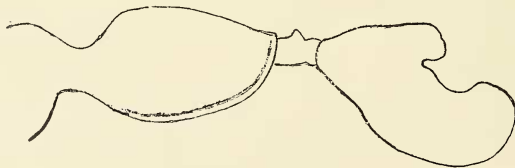


Fig. 1. *Synemosyna transversa*, sp. nov. Lateral view of the thoracic and abdominal regions. The anterior portion of the cephalo-thorax not shown.

and the dorsal surface of the thoracic region in the middle bears two long hairs. The pedicel is a little longer than broad and is about half the length

¹ Simon, F., *Hist. Nat. Araignées*, (Paris 1897), T. ii, pp. 508-512.

² Thorell, T., *Spiders of Burma* (London, 1895), pp. 320-322, 325 and 328 and *Ann. Mus. Civ. Stor. Nat. Genova.*, xxv, p. 339, (1887).

of the distance between the anterior and the third row of eyes. The pedicel possesses a small flat node at its middle. The abdomen is oval in form and

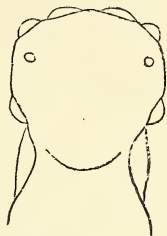


Fig. 2. Dorsal view of the cephalic region.

a little longer than the thoracic region ; it is clothed with a silky pubescence while the pilosity on its posterior region is dense. The sides of the abdomen are rugose.

A deep and broad transverse groove separates the anterior third of the abdomen from its posterior portion. The dorsal surface of the abdomen lying in front of the transverse groove is depressed between its dorso-lateral surfaces and its posterior edge overhangs the transverse groove. A longitudinal groove is present on the ventral surface of the abdomen and extends from the posterior limit of the epigynum to as far as the spinnerets.

The legs are slender, 4, 3, 1, 2. The femur of the last pair of legs is the longest, and its tibia and protarsus are subequal. The legs are furnished with spines ; those on the protarsus and tarsus being very numerous and densely situated.

The dorsal surface of the cephalic area, which is bounded by the eyes, is reddish brown. The sides of the cephalic region and the whole of the thorax are brownish-black, while the abdomen is black. The coxae and the trochanters of 2nd, 3rd and 4th pairs of legs are black. The femur, patella and tibia are fuscous, while the other portions of the legs are yellowish-brown.

The type specimen is preserved in the Museum of the Zoological Department of the University of Calcutta.